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VOLUME XXVI, No. 7

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1932

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## APOLLONIUS CALLED THE RHODIAN

(Concluded from page 46)

That Apollonius was fully conscious of the greater importance of Book 3 and of its novelty is shown by his fresh invocation to Erato, the patroness of love poetry, and by the apparatus of gods, which he employs only in this book. The Hellenistic gods are very human in their daily life, as the delightful passage at the beginning of Book 3 shows. Hera and Athena, the heavenly protectresses of the Argonauts, decide to implore Aphrodite to set Medea afire with love for Jason, by the aid of her son Eros. Aphrodite had made her husband's bed when the socially superior goddesses called, and was in the act of braiding her own hair. She flutters to meet them, and remarks on the infrequency of their visits. When she has heard their request, she complains that she cannot get her unruly boy to obey her. These goddesses are clearly reminiscent of Praxinoa and Gorgo in Theocritus 15, and the ladies of the Ptolemaic court must have found them amusing if they looked upon them as goddesses. But for an audience for whom the traditional Greek gods bore no associations of theology Apollonius's depiction of them as well-bred ladies is quite successful; certainly they act in a more ladylike way, according to Alexandrian conceptions of ladyhood, than the brawling Olympians in the Iliad.

But the sequel seems to show that Apollonius meant to be amusing. Aphrodite finds her son gloating, just as he has vanquished Ganymede in a shady game of dice<sup>38</sup>. Eros is persuaded by the promise of a new ball, deposits his unrighteous gains with his mother (after shrewdly counting them over), and prepares to shoot his fateful arrow into the heart of the Colchian princess. To us the interference of Eros in the love affair seems to be entirely superfluous. It is altogether natural for a spirited young princess to fall in love with a handsome foreigner in distress. But in Greek literature, and particularly in Greek epic poetry, the situation was strange enough to call for the intervention of a god. The slavish copying of this device is a flaw in the verisimilitude of Aeneid, Book 4. The elaborate substitution by Vergil of Cupid for Ascanius that he might smite the Carthaginian with love for Aeneas is entirely superfluous. In the half dozen lines describing Eros's descent from Olympus<sup>39</sup> over "the life-giving earth and cities of men and sacred streams of rivers, and now in turn mountain peaks and the ocean all around" Apollonius reaches the height of his poetic imagination, according to Mackail<sup>40</sup>, who considers the lines too perfect for him to attempt a translation of them.

Of the Loves of Jason and Medea, as an eighteenth-

century translator of Apollonius, Book 3 called his work<sup>41</sup>, it is difficult to give a summary at once adequate and brief. I shall give as little of the story as I may, largely in the words of the admirable verse translation of the late Arthur S. Way<sup>42</sup>. My purpose is not only to exhibit something of the poem directly, but to afford readers the opportunity of noticing some of the obvious parallels between Vergil and Apollonius.

Jason, accompanied by two Argonauts and the sons of Phrixus and Chalciope, goes to the palace of Aeetes; he is hidden in a mist which Hera provides. This device admits the romantic possibility of Medea being the first of the Colchians to see Jason. Eros does his work, with the result that<sup>43</sup>

Deep down in the maiden's bosom burned  
His arrow like unto flame; and at Aison's son she cast  
Side-glances of love evermore; and panted hard and  
fast  
'Neath its burden the heart in her breast, nor did any  
remembrance remain  
Of aught beside, but her soul was melted with rapturous  
pain.  
And as some poor daughter of toil, who hath distaff  
ever in hand,  
Heapeth the slivers of wood about a blazing brand  
To lighten her darkness with splendour her rafters  
beneath, when her eyes  
Have prevented the dawn; and the flame, upleaping  
in wondrous wise  
From the one little torch, ever waxing consumeth all  
that heap;  
So, burning in secret, about her heart did he coil and  
creep,  
Love the destroyer: her soft cheeks' colour went and  
came,  
Pale now, and anon, through her soul's confusion,  
with crimson aflame.

Aeetes's palace is described, in terms suggestive of Alcinous's in the Odyssey. Like a Homeric chieftain or a North Georgia mountaineer the king offers the strangers entertainment before he inquires their names or their business. It is while a whole ox is being prepared—truly a princely feast—that Eros shoots his arrow. After the banquet Argus states the business of the Argonauts in politic words. King Aeetes naturally refuses to give up the Golden Fleece, and scornfully stipulates the familiar conditions of plowing a field with the fire-belching oxen, sowing in the field the teeth of the dragon, and harvesting the crop of the Earth-born. Aeetes is convinced that the expedition has come to seize his kingdom; he has had an oracle to the effect that his own descendants would do him some great harm, and he thinks that the sons of Phrixus have come to drive him from his realm. When Jason hears the conditions, *ἥτις αὐτῷ ἀφθογγος, δυηχανέων κακτητι*. But he could only yield, and so he consents, *δυηχανί*

<sup>38</sup>De Mirmont (see note 36, above), 308, quotes a plausible opinion to the effect that Apollonius is here describing an actual work of art. <sup>39</sup>3.160–166.

<sup>40</sup>See page 262 of the work named in note 1, above.

<sup>41</sup>J. Edkins (London, 1771). <sup>42</sup>See note 33, above.  
<sup>43</sup>3.286–298.

*βεβοληγέντος.* But despite his febleness Jason possesses the inestimable advantage of good looks<sup>44</sup>:

But the son of Aison outshone all there in wondrous wise  
In goodlihead and in grace: ever wandered the maiden's eyes  
Askance unto him, as she stealthily parted her veil's soft gleam.  
And her heart was a smouldering fire of pain; and her soul, as a dream.  
Stole after her love, flitting still in his track as his feet fared on....

And Medea thereafter followed; and surged like a rushing river  
The thoughts through her breast—the thoughts that Love awakeneth ever.  
And before her eyes the vision of all evermore she had—  
Himself, even like as he was, and the vesture wherein he was clad,  
How he spake, how he sat on his seat, how forth of the doors he strode,  
And she dreamed as she mused that all the world beside had showed  
None other such man. In her ears evermore the music rung  
Of his voice, and the words that in sweetness of honey had dropped from his tongue.  
And she trembled for him, lest the bulls or Aietes himself might slay  
Her beloved, and took up a mourning for him, as though he lay  
Dead even now; and adown her cheeks soft-stealing tears  
Flowed, of her measureless pity, her burden of haunting fears.  
And she mourned, and the low lamentation wailed from her tortured breast:  
'Why, wretch that I am, is this anguish upon me?—or be he the best  
Of heroes who now is to perish, or be he the vilest of all,  
Let him go to his doom!—yet O that on him no scathe might fall!  
Oh might it be so, thou Daughter of Perseus, Goddess revered!  
Oh might he but win home, 'scaping his doom!—but if this be his weird,  
By the bulls to be overmastered, or ever it be too late  
Might he know it, that I be not forced to exult o'er the thing that I hate!'  
So was the maiden distraught by the cares that racked her mind.

The account of the gloomy council which the Argonauts then hold shows considerable skill in delineation of character. Peleus, noticing Jason's utter dejection, offers, with a grand gesture, to undergo the trials himself. His example fires several others to volunteer. Argus, politic as ever, informs the heroes of the possibility of assistance from his aunt Medea, who is skilful in magic: if such is the pleasure of the company, he will undertake to ask his mother Chalciope to engage her sister's sympathy on their behalf. Mopsus observes an omen which ratifies Argus's suggestion. Idas (in the character of Thersites) speaks scornfully of resorting for help to women and to the omens of birds. Jason, always ready to accept the advice which he always needs, rebukes Idas and sends Argus on his errand. Meanwhile Aeetes, too, has held a council.

<sup>44</sup>3.443-447, 451-471.

His determination to burn the Argo and to slay the heroes is reported in a very long, prosaic, passage in *oratio obliqua*, quite without parallel in Greek or Latin poetry. But our interest is centered in the growth of love in the heart of Medea. She, meanwhile, seeks respite from her thoughts<sup>45</sup>:

Now the maiden had cast her down on her couch, and slumber deep  
Of her anguish relieved her; but straightway dreams came haunting her sleep,  
Such visions dark and deceitful as trouble the anguish-distraught.  
For it seemed that the stranger had taken upon him the task; but she thought  
That it was not the Fleece of the Ram that he longed to win for prize,  
Nor yet for the sake of this had he fared in any wise To Aietes' city, but only to lead her, his wedded wife, Unto his home; and she dreamed that herself did wrestle in strife  
With the bulls, and exceeding lightly the mighty labour she wrought.  
Howbeit thereafter her parents set their promise at naught,  
For that not to their child, but to him, was the challenge to yoke that team.  
Wherefore contention of wrangling clashed through her troubled dream  
'Twixt her sire and the strangers: and lo, in her hand the decision they laid,  
That the issue should follow her will, and the thoughts of the heart of the maid.  
And straightway the stranger she chose: all reverence thrust she aside  
For her parents; and measureless anguish seized them, and loud they cried  
In their fury, and sleep forsook her at that heart-thrilling sound.

Apollonius shows a clearer insight into the psychology of dreams than does Homer. The dreams of Agamemnon and Achilles in the Iliad and of Penelope in the Odyssey are supernatural; they are sent with a purpose, not prepared beforehand, like Medea's, by the feelings of the dreamer. Medea's dream reveals the hope, which she would never as yet confess in a waking moment, that Jason may somehow carry her off as his wife; it foretells, furthermore, that, when the choice between her parents and Jason shall have to be made, she will choose Jason. She awakes, and the thoughts of her dream are still with her. Jason's Quest, she feels, is for herself; he is a suitor, at the moment, not for an abstract fleece but for her own pulsing heart and for her hand<sup>46</sup>:

And all a-quiver with fear she upstarted: she stared all round  
On the walls of her chamber; her fluttering spirit back to her breast  
Scarce drew she: the words like a panic-struck throng through her pale lips pressed:  
'O wretched I!—how nightmare visions my spirit appal!  
I fear me lest awful ills from the herbes' voyage befall:  
And my heart, my heart for the stranger is tossed in a storm of dismay.  
Let him woo some girl in his own Achaia far away,  
And be maidenhood mine, and mine in the house of my parents to stay!'

She decides to help the Argonauts, ostensibly only to

<sup>45</sup>3.616-632.

<sup>46</sup>3.633-640.

save Chalciope's children. But, when she tries to go to Chalciope, she is restrained by a maidenly modesty<sup>47</sup>:

...she yearned full sore  
To go to her sister, and over the threshold stole the  
maid:  
Yet lingering—lingering—long at the door of the  
chamber she stayed  
Held by her shame. Then backward in sudden  
panic she fled,  
And into her bower she darted, and shrank to the  
shadows in dread.  
And backward and forward her purposeless feet ever  
paced in vain;  
For whenso she braced her to go, shame fettered her  
feet with its chain,  
And ever as shame plucked back, bold passion  
spurred her amain.  
Thrice she essayed, thrice stayed she; but now at the  
fourth essay  
Down on her bed on her face did she cast her, and  
writhing she lay.

A slave that served as maid to Medea notices her distraction and reports it to Chalciope, who fears that Medea's distress may betoken bad tidings for her sons. This gives Medea an opening to offer her assistance, and the offer is eagerly accepted. But Medea is not yet at peace with herself. We have a vivid portrayal of her spiritual wrestlings in the stillness of the night<sup>48</sup>:

Then night drew darkness over the earth; on the  
lonely sea  
The sailors gazed from their ships on the Bear and the  
flashing three  
Of Orion; and came upon every wayfarer longing for  
sleep,  
And on each gate-warder; and mothers, that daylong  
wont to weep  
For children dead, with the peace of slumber were  
folded around.  
No barking of dogs through the city there was any  
more, no sound  
Of voices, but all the blackening gloom was with  
silence bound.  
But not o'er Medea did sleep sweet dews of forget-  
fulness shake;  
For many a care in her yearning for Jason held her  
awake,  
Adread of the mighty strength of the bulls, 'neath the  
fury of whom  
He must die in the War-god's acre, must die by a  
shameful doom.  
And with thick fast throbings struggled the heart in  
her breast alway;  
As when on the wall of a dwelling the leaping sun-  
beams play  
Plung up from the water that into a cauldron but  
now fell flashing,  
Or into a pail, and hither and thither the sunbeam  
flashing  
In lightning eddy and flicker is dying in mad unrest,  
So quivered and fluttered the heart within the  
maiden's breast.  
And the tears from her eyes were flowing for ruth,  
and through all her frame  
Like a smouldering fire her anguish burned, and  
coiled its flame  
Round every fine-strung nerve, and thrilled to her  
beating brain  
Where sharpest of all the pang strikes in, when the  
shafts of pain  
Are shot to the heart by the Loves that rest them  
never from harm.

The fourth and fifth lines of this quotation Professor

<sup>47</sup>3.646-655.    <sup>48</sup>3.744-765.

H. W. Prescott has called<sup>49</sup> an example of "truly Hellenistic sensationalism". But surely they are as essentially human as anything in Greek literature. It may be in place here also to mention an interesting philological point. When Way writes "As when on the wall of a dwelling the leaping sunbeams play . . .", he is clearly translating the old text, *ἡλίου ὡς τὸ τε δόμοις ἐνιπάλλεται αἴγλη*. But an almost certain correction, *δοκοῖς* for *δόμοις*, has been derived<sup>50</sup> by comparison with Aeneid 8.22-25:

labris ubi lumen aenis  
sole repercutsum aut radiantis imagine lunae  
omnia pervolat late loca, iamque sub auras  
erigitur summique ferit laquearia tecti.

Here *laquearia* = *δοκοῖς*. When a master's text can be corrected by his disciple's copy, the disciple must have been a faithful copyist. I may note further that, in the lines localizing Medea's anguish with anatomical accuracy and in technical language<sup>51</sup>—"anguish tortured her . . . about her fine nerves and deep down beneath the nape of the neck where the pain enters keenest . . ." —, Apollonius is yielding to a characteristic common to himself and to Alexandrian poets generally. They are all fond of parading at the wrong time their knowledge of the various sciences.

Medea prepares her drugs by night (the Herb of Prometheus provides Apollonius a chance for another learned disquisition), and after a careful toilette drives out in a mule car with her maidens, like another Nausicaa, to the rendezvous at the Temple of Hecate. She leaves her maidens and prepares to meet Jason alone. He, meanwhile, accompanied by Argus and the seer Mopsus, is coming from the Argo. To Mopsus, who can understand the language of birds, a crow on a poplar branch reads a lecture on how to be the perfect chaperon<sup>52</sup>:

A sorry prophet this, a witless seer,  
Who hath not yet for all his skill divined  
What even to children is right plain and clear,  
That never maiden was so bold of mind  
To give a youth one loving word and kind  
When strangers were at hand nor would retire.  
Go, foolish prophet, ignorant and blind!  
Never did Cyprus thy dull heart inspire,  
Nor ever feltest thou the breath of warm desire.

A man and a maid meeting at a rustic temple at dawn need no third<sup>53</sup>:

So these twain stood—all stirless and wordless face  
to face:  
As oaks they seemed or as pines upsoaring in stately  
grace,  
Which side by side all still mid the mountains rooted  
stand  
When winds are hushed; but by breath of the breeze  
when at last they are fanned,  
Stir they with multitudinous murmur and sigh—so  
they  
By love's breath stirred were to pour out all in their  
hearts that lay.

<sup>49</sup>In a review of Mooney's edition (see note 1, above) which every user of that book should see, in *Classical Philology* 8(1913), 369-372; the quotation is on page 372.

<sup>50</sup>See the critical note on 3.750 in Gillies (see note 1, above), 81. The editions of Mooney and Seaton retain the manuscript reading.

<sup>51</sup>3.761-765. I quote Seaton's prose to make my point clearer, and to afford an instance where the prose and the verse translations may be compared.

<sup>52</sup>3.932-937. The version is by J. C. Wordsworth, printed on page 178 of the book named in note 1, above.    <sup>53</sup>3.966-971.

In such a situation as this Jason is not troubled by *ἀμύχαστος*. All the resources of a fashionable Greek education are brought to bear on the heart of the barbarian maid<sup>84</sup>:

Extolling her so spake he; and her eyelids drooped,  
while played  
A nectar-smile on her lips; and melted the heart of  
the maid  
By his praising uplifted: her eyes are a moment up-  
raised to his eyes,  
And all speech faileth: no word at the first to her lips  
may rise;  
But in one breath yearned she to speak forth all her  
joy and her pain.  
And with hand ungrudging forth from her odorous  
zone hath she ta'en  
The charm, and he straightway received it into his  
hands full fain.  
Yea, now would she even have drawn forth all her  
soul from her breast,  
And had laid it with joy in his hands for her gift, had  
he made request,  
So wondrously now from the golden head of Aison's  
son  
Did Love out-lighten the witchery-flame; and her  
sweet eyes shone  
With the gleam that he stole therefrom, and her heart  
glowed through and through  
Melting for rapture away, from the lips of the rose as  
the dew  
At the sun's kiss melteth away, when the dayspring is  
kindled anew.

Medea controls her excitement long enough to give Jason explicit directions for carrying out the tasks on the morrow. But she realizes that these very directions will but serve to insure his safe return to Greece, and she weeps at the thought of his departure, "... For the shamefastness now from her eyes on the wings of love had flown..."<sup>85</sup> She begs Jason to think of her when he is far away in Greece. For Jason the meeting has been rather successful, and he generously professes a high and enduring regard for Medea. Medea then conjures up a picture of Jason's life at his palace back in Greece, and expresses a wish to occupy the queen's place at his board. Jason then quite handsomely offers his hand and his heart<sup>86</sup>:

And nothing shall come between our love and nothing  
shall sunder.  
Till death's shroud fold us around, and our hearts are  
chilled thereunder.

At this Medea becomes so enraptured that Jason finds it necessary to urge her to return home lest someone espy them. Jason departs exulting, but Medea cannot even notice her handmaidens trooping to her side<sup>87</sup>.

For her soul to the clouds had soared far up 'twixt  
earth and the blue.  
And with feet that moved in a dream she mounted  
the fleet-running wain....

Jason's domination of the fire-breathing bulls and the Earth-born on the next day would be truly heroic if we could forget the petticoat influence which made his prowess possible. But the struggle is vigorously described, and with a wealth of similes. Book 3 ends with Jason victorious at the close of his day of toil.

At the beginning of Book 4 we learn that Aeetes, who

has no intention of keeping his promise, suspects his daughter of treason. Medea, aware of this suspicion, determines to fly to the Argonauts<sup>88</sup>:

And she kissed her bed, and her hands on the walls  
with loving caresses  
Lingered: she kissed the posts of the doors; and one  
long tress  
She severed, and left it her bower within, for her  
mother to be  
A memorial of maidenhood's days, and with passion-  
ate voice moaned she:  
'This tress in mine own stead leave I, or ever I go,  
unto thee,  
My mother; and, far though I wend, yet take fare-  
well from me!  
Farewell thou, Chalkiope, and mine home!—Would  
God that the wave,  
Ere thou cam'st to the Kolchian land, O stranger,  
had yawned for thy grave!"

The last line seems strangely incongruous in an ardent maid who had determined to stake all for love. I have spoken of Apollonius as a reconciler of diverse traditions. No harmonization could be more difficult than that of the passionate barbarian known to us from Euripides's play and the innocent young maiden of the earlier portion of Apollonius's romance. Here we perceive a transition to the Euripidean character. In the actual taking of the Golden Fleece, told with absorbing interest and a wealth of figures, Medea is cool and calculating, and Jason is a puppet guided by her superior force and intelligence.

With its plunder safe on board the Argo hastily puts out to sea, sails up the Halys, then down a branch of the Danube which, by a bit of delirious Alexandrian geography<sup>89</sup>, emptied into the Adriatic. But here they had been preceded by a group of Colchians under Medea's brother Absyrtus, who had come by a shorter way. Confronted by a superior force, the Argonauts consent to a treaty whereby the Golden Fleece is to be retained as having been fairly won according to Aeetes's conditions, but Medea is to be returned. When Medea hears of the arrangement, she denounces Jason in a scathing excoriation worthy of her Euripidean namesake. She despises the man she had loved, and only because she needs him does she try to hold him. His great deeds, she reminds him, are really her own, and she threatens the direst vengeance for his treachery. Overwhelmed by such a torrent poor Jason can only say that the treaty was a mere scrap of paper, agreed to under duress: he had had no intention of abiding by its conditions, but was only seeking time for some subtle stroke. Although his conduct is utterly indefensible, we feel for Jason in this situation something of the sympathy which we feel for Mr. Milquetoast in the cartoons. Medea knows as well as we that Jason is crawling, but she takes him at his word. The bold stroke that she suggests is nothing less than the treacherous murder of Absyrtus. The poet's preparation of his audience for the murder is carefully built up. If Medea is to urge and Jason is to perform the deed, the antecedent circumstances could not be bettered for veri-

<sup>84</sup>4.26-34.

<sup>85</sup>Emile Delage, *La Géographie dans les Argonautiques d'Apollonius de Rhodes* (Bordeaux, Peret et Fils, 1930), shows that Apollonius at his wildest is only reproducing current Hellenistic notions of geography; a summary of Delage's work is given on 296-297.

similitude. By this time, too, the change in Medea's character has become evident enough, so that we are not struck by an inconsistency in her brutality toward her own flesh and blood. Absyrtus, fond man, had meant<sup>60</sup>

...to try her with words,—as though some tender child should try  
A wintertide torrent, when strong men may not cross thereby!

Apollonius's version of the murder of Absyrtus is not as repulsive as the alternative story<sup>61</sup>, favored by Roman writers, according to which Medea dropped her brother overboard in fragments from time to time, in order that Aeetes's pursuit might be delayed by his performance of the pious duty of picking up the pieces. But Apollonius's version is gruesome enough: why should he have included it? There was a tribe called the Absyrtians, and other tribes claimed descent from the Colchians who pursued the Argo; the conscientious scholar-poet had too great a respect for tradition to omit the story.

After much intricate travel the Argonauts arrive at the island of Medea's kinswoman Circe, and then rapidly experience most of the adventures that Odysseus experienced in the waters of the western Mediterranean. The variations from the Homeric stories are interesting and the stories themselves are well told; especially fine is the account of how Thetis and the Nereids helped the Argo past the Wandering Rocks. But Book 4, which contains all this material, is without the high romance of Book 3 because there is no unifying motive. We are treated to a conducted tour of the western Mediterranean with a cicerone of wide and varied information on cults and legends and equally wide and varied misinformation on geography.

At the island of the Phaeacians the Argonauts are welcomed by Alcinous, but soon a band of Colchians, who had come by a different route than that taken by the party with Absyrtus, arrives and demands the surrender of Medea. Medea's pleas to avert her doom illustrate her cleverness. She engages Queen Arete's interest by a pitiful petition which gives a strong impression of youth and innocence in distress. To the Argonauts her tone is different. She reminds them of their obligations to her, of their promises to protect her, of their self-respect. The men are so moved that they are ready to defend Medea with arms; Jason says and does nothing in her behalf.

Alcinous had declared that he would pronounce judgment on the following day. But that night Arete coaxes her husband and discovers his purpose: if Medea is still a virgin, he will restore her to her father, but, if she is already married to Jason, he will not separate her from her husband. Alcinous turns over and goes to sleep, and Arete sends the news to the Argonauts. The celebration of the marriage is described in one of Apollonius's best passages. When Alcinous formally pronounces his decision the next morning, the marriage has already been consummated, and the Colchians must yield.

In connection with the account of the marriage modern readers are likely to experience a feeling of dis-

appointment. We expect some expression of exaltation or rapture at the consummation of the marriage after the many trials of the lovers. Instead we get a lament that the marriage could not have been celebrated under happier circumstances. It was "hard compulsion" that "constrained them now to be joined". For<sup>62</sup>

...never the tribes of the woe-stricken children of earth  
May tread full-footed the path of delight, but still  
With our mirth  
Hand in hand goeth pacing affliction bitter as gall....

But we must remember that our subject is the Quest of the Golden Fleece, not the loves of Jason and Medea. Else the story should stop here, as a modern (but not too modern) story would, and not go on for 600 lines to the most abrupt stop in literature, when the Argo reaches sight of her home port. But these 600 lines all tell of sites or legends connected with the Argonauts, and Apollonius could not leave them in the ink-pot. Regardless of his own preferences, for example, Apollonius must tell how for twelve days and nights the heroes carried their vessel on their shoulders over the desert of Libya<sup>63</sup>:

Lo, this is the song of the Muses, and I but sing their strain,  
The Pierides' servant; and this true tale in mine ears hath been told....

The trouble with these stories, again, is not that they are not well told or complete in themselves, but that they have no relationship to a larger scheme: there is no causal nexus between them. We get no answer, on the other hand, to questions suggested by even normal curiosity: What became of the Golden Fleece? Did Pelias keep his promise? Did Jason and Medea live happily ever after? The poet takes leave of his heroes as they sail homeward from Aegina. It is as if a sedate parson had undertaken to care, for a season, of an active and troublesome group of boys, and had done his best to share the lives of the boys while they were in his care. But, when at the end of the period, he has restored them to their relatives, he breathes a deep sigh of relief, pronounces his blessing, and disclaims responsibility for their subsequent conduct<sup>64</sup>:

Be gracious, O blest generation of chieftains!—may these lays ring  
Year after year in the ears of men ever sweeter to sing!  
For now at the last am I come to the glorious ending of all,  
To the bourne of your travail: for struggle nor strife did thereafter befall  
Unto you, as homeward-bound from Aegina did Argo flee,  
Neither tempest of winds brake forth; but over a peaceful sea  
By the land of Kekrops, by Aulis coasting, and under the lee  
Of Euboea, by cities Opuntian of Lokrian men did ye fleet,  
Till with rapture of welcome on Pagasae's strand ye set your feet.

Apollonius's feebleness of construction and excess of erudition have been sufficiently indicated. Let me

<sup>60</sup>4.460-461.

<sup>61</sup>See Robert (as cited in note 23, above), 801, and notes.

<sup>62</sup>4.1165-1167.

<sup>63</sup>4.1381-1382.

<sup>64</sup>4.1773-1781 (the concluding verses of the poem).

close with the mention of a few of his virtues<sup>65</sup>. The language of Apollonius is often spoken of as a mere cento of Homeric phrases. The truth of the matter has been stated by Robinson Ellis<sup>66</sup>:

For Apollonius the problem was how to write an epic which should be modelled on the Homeric epics, yet be so completely different as to suggest, not resemblance, but contrast.... Nay, we believe that a minute examination of Apollonius' language would show that he placed himself under the most rigid laws of *intentional dissimilarity*.

Apollonius avoids the stock Homeric epithets and lines for transitions and recurring situations. His use of the hexameter is deft and his purple patches possess in a special degree musical qualities and accommodation of sound to sense. He has short passages of rare poetic insight. First among the Greeks he shows a true feeling for the more somber aspects of nature. Most important, he is the first to give us a detailed and true description of the way of a man with a maid. These merits which the Argonautica possesses, quite apart from their interest for the student of linguistics, of antiquarian lore, and of Vergil, should serve to rank the poem with the best works of Greek literature. Perhaps, with the renascence of interest in the Hellenistic period and the growing realization that the epoch is of the greatest significance for the history of western civilization, Apollonius will at last receive his due recognition as the greatest poet of the age and as an important literary innovator for all ages.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

MOSES HADAS

### LUCAN 7.1-6

Segnior Oceano quam lex aeterna vocabat  
luctificus Titan numquam magis aethera contra  
egit equos cursumque polo rapiente retrorsit,  
defectusque pati voluit raptaque labore  
lucis, et attraxit nubes, non pabula flammis,  
sed ne Thessalico purus luceret in orbe.

Thus Lucan describes the dawn of the day that was to usher in the horrors of the Battle of Pharsalus. It is a common conceit of the poets thus to represent the heavenly bodies as desiring to flee from the sight of human wickedness, or to shut off that sight<sup>67</sup>. Here the sun is said to be of two minds about rising, to hope for eclipse, and, finally, to shroud his visage in clouds.

The present note is concerned chiefly with verses 1-3, wherein the words *numquam magis aethera contra egit equos* present a considerable difficulty in that, on the surface, they seem to say that never did the sun drive harder up the steep of heaven, which is in flat contradiction to the rest of the sentence and the general tenor of the passage as a whole.

To save the situation, Professor Housman has recourse to a principle of ancient astronomical science, which, he says, regarded the sun as moving from west to

<sup>65</sup>The best study of the poetic merits and defects of Apollonius, the study from which I have learnt most and on which I lean most heavily, is that of J. C. Wordsworth (see note 1, above). See especially pages 103-213.

<sup>66</sup>Quoted by Way, in The Translator's Epilogue, on page 208 of the volume named in note 33, above.

<sup>67</sup>Compare e. g. Ovid, Metamorphoses 10, 448-449 *Fugit aureo caelo luna, tegunt nigrae latitantia sidera nubes*; Petronius 122, 127-129.

east through the signs of the zodiac and completing the full circuit in a year.

This slow motion, of course, was not to be compared with the speed of the daily revolution of the sky in the contrary direction. Hence, though himself moving east, the sun every day was swept back to the west as the sky revolved. Professor Housman makes comparison with a fly walking slowly on the rim of a wheel revolving in the opposite direction<sup>68</sup>.

Applying this conception to the passage in hand, we get the view that on the morning of the Battle of Pharsalus the sun mended his pace toward the east so that he might counteract the movement of the sky in the converse direction. Thus he would avoid being carried up into the heavens, and *aethera contra egit equos* would describe an action quite in harmony with the rest of his behavior on this occasion.

It often is a dangerous matter to interpret poetry in the light of science; the present instance forms no exception to the rule. For the reference here is not to a sidereal body, but to the sun god, who drives a chariot (3) and who dreads the sight of the woes to come.

This conception cannot be squared with the idea of a heavenly body moving slowly eastward along an orbit through the Signs of the zodiac, unless we are to assume that at dawn the tail of the chariot normally rises first, presenting the back of the sun to the world. It is as if we should try to apply our scientific knowledge to the elucidation of the words "See the sun in splendor rising from his ocean bed".

In poetic fancy, the chariot of the sun surely is driven from the east to the west. So the Sun himself describes the route in Ovid, Metamorphoses 2, 63-70:

Ardua prima via est et qua vix mane recentes  
enituntur equi; medio est altissima caelo  
unde mare et terras ipsi mihi saepe videre  
sit timor et pavida trepidet formidine pectoris;  
ultima prona via est et eget moderamine certo;  
tunc etiam quae me subiectis excipit undis,  
ne ferar in praecips, Tethys solet ipsa vereri.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>68</sup>This idea is based on the comment in Endt (see note 5, below). It is amplified by Professor Housman in The Classical Quarterly 4 (1910), 191, and repeated in his edition of Lucan. <For that edition see THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 21, 54-56. C. K. >. The idea appears also in J. D. Duff's translation, in The Loeb Classical Library (1928). <For this work see THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 22, 163-164. C. K. >

<sup>69</sup>These verses are followed immediately by an apparently contradictory statement, as the Sun accumulates reasons why Phaethon should not attempt to drive the chariot (79-75):

Adde quod adsidua rapitur vertigine caelum  
sideraque alta trahit clerique volumine torquet.  
Nitor in adversum, nec me, qui cetera, vincit  
impetus, et rapido contrarius evehor orbi.  
Finge datos currus: quid agas? Poterisne rotatis  
obvius ire polis, ne te catus auferat axis?

Whatever these verses mean, they certainly do not fit an ancient astronomical conception of the sun as moving slowly eastward through the zodiac, requiring a year to complete the journey. Here the god is said to advance rapidly, and to prevail over a retrograde movement of the sky; and Phaethon, who asks to drive but for one day (48), would have to thread his way through many threatening Signs of the zodiac (78-83).

The Sun is grasping at every consideration that might deter Phaethon from the dangerous attempt; and, if he falls into inconsistency, we may say the same of the logic of Cicero and others. It is a great mistake to measure the writings of the ancients by twentieth-century standards of accuracy and consistency. Effect was the thing for which the ancients often strove most earnestly, with supreme indifference to mere fact.

The reader might look with profit at my notes on this whole passage of Ovid. At the end of my note on 76-78 I said, "... Ovid here disregards the fact that it takes the Sun an entire year to move through the zodiac". Further, one will do well to recall that to take Ovid seriously is, often, to make a serious mistake. In this connection see my notes on *oculis... nosritis*, Metamorphoses

Fresh from the night's rest, the horses issue from the portals of the dawn and struggle up the difficult steep, then have to be held back as the way declines to the western ocean<sup>4</sup>.

In Lucan 7. 3-4 the expression *aethera contra egit equos* and the words following are naturally taken to mean that the sun made a short start westward up the steep, and then turned back. Note the comment in Usener<sup>5</sup> (the italics are mine): "Nam et tardius exortus est et modice progressus polis in se rotantibus recucurrit".

In like manner, speaking of the day of Thyestes's horrid banquet, Ovid represents the sun as turning back his horses from the accustomed western course (*Tristia* 2. 391-392):

Si non Aeropen frater sceleratus amasset,  
aversos Solis non legeremus equos<sup>6</sup>.

It still remains to deal with the words *numquam magis* (2), which, with this interpretation, must be separated from *egit equos* (3). Some would connect them with *luctificus* (2)<sup>7</sup>. This gives a satisfactory sense, and, for Lucan at any rate, the word-order presents no insuperable difficulty<sup>8</sup>.

In point of view of meaning, it would be even more satisfactory if *numquam magis* could be attached to *segnior* (1). Cortius does not hesitate here, but says: "Ordo est: Numquam magis segnior Titan ex Oceano contra aethera equos egit". A serious drawback to this treatment is that it slights the intervening expression *quam lex aeterna vocabat*.

It would seem that, if *segnior* and *numquam magis* are to be connected, the latter expression must be regarded as somewhat parenthetic. The sense then would be, 'More slowly from the Ocean than the eternal law demanded—never more so—did the grief-bringing Titan drive his horses up the steep, and he (even) turned backward his course against the pole that would sweep him upward'.

Such parenthetic effect is not uncommon in comparative expressions generally. Compare e. g. Plautus, *Trinummus* 835 Ita iam quasi canes—hau secus—circumstabant navem turbines venti; Tacitus, *Annales* 12. 43. 3 Quindecim dierum alimenta urbi—non amplius—superfuisse constituit<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>2.46.</sup> *iuravimus undas*, 2.101, *manifesta . . . cernes*, 2.133, *consiliis . . . nostris*, 2.146, and the Introduction to Ovid, § 394 in my edition of Vergil and Ovid. One need not be in the least disturbed by any violence that Ovid does at any time to facts. C. K. >.

In connection with the verses cited in this note compare Lucan 10.199-200, 7.198-199; Manilius 1.259. Lucan 1. 535-537 is interesting from another point of view.

<sup>10</sup> Note the description of the rising of the sun in Tacitus, *Germania* 45.1.

<sup>11</sup> Data are here given for various works dealing with Lucan that are mentioned in this paper: G. Cortius, as edited by C. P. Weber (Leipzig, C. H. F. Hartmann, 1828-1829); J. Endt, *Adnotationes Super Lucanum* (Leipzig, Teubner, 1909); C. E. Haskins, M. Annaei Lucani Pharsalia (London, George Bell and Sons, 1887); Petrus-Augustus Lemaire, M. Annaei Lucani Pharsalia (Paris, 1830); H. Usener, M. Annaei Lucani Commenta Bernensis (Leipzig, Teubner, 1869); C. M. Weise, M. Annaei Lucani Pharsaliae Libri X (Quedlinburg and Leipzig, 1835).

<sup>12</sup> Of this same incident Lucan himself says (1. 543-544): ... qualem fugiente per ortus sole Thysteae noctem duxere Mycenae. Compare also Seneca, *Thyestes* 802-804, *Phaedra* 674-679.

<sup>13</sup> So Weise, Lemaire, and Haskins, in their comments on the passage (see note 5, above).

<sup>14</sup> A more difficult word-order is accepted generally by the editors in 8. 342-343: . . . quem captos ducere reges vidit ab Hyrcanis Indoque a litore silvis, and in 5.321.

<sup>15</sup> Compare Tacitus, *Historiae* 4. 52. 4 decem—haud amplius—dierum frumentum in horreis fuerit; Livy 41. 22. 6 triduum—non plus—Delphias moratus; Sallust, *Bellum Iugurthinum* 105. 3 mille—non amplius—equitibus.

All things considered, this interpretation seems rather promising for the expression now under discussion. If it is accepted, verses 2-3 would be punctuated as follows: luctificus Titan—numquam magis—aethera contra egit equos . . .

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

H. C. NUTTING

## REVIEW

*Latin Fundamentals*. By Ernest L. Hettich and A. G. C. Maitland. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc. (1930). Pp. xiii + 319.

Of making beginning Latin books there is no end. The reason is clear to any one who has taught pupils who are beginning the study of Latin. Every teacher who can find the time and the energy and a publisher makes a book to suit his own ideals, because no existing book exactly fits his needs. The rest of us take what comes nearest to our ideals and adapt it to our purposes and ideals as best we can, with more or less wincing and raging. Particularly has this been true since the discarding of Latin as a requirement for entrance to College has been followed logically by the providing of opportunity to begin the study of the language in College. One and another of the books intended for High School beginners have been tried, found wanting, and made to 'do', while plans for a text-book designed for College pupils who begin the study of Latin in College were gradually shaping in the troubled minds of instructors.

It is with a deep sense of relief, therefore, that such an instructor takes up the work here under review. The Preface promises well, and the body of the book carries out the promise. The differences between the demands of High School beginners and College beginners have been clearly perceived and intelligently provided for. Comparatively slight as is the gain in maturity of mind distinguishing the second group, it is nevertheless very real, and the authors of this book have taken appropriate advantage of it. They have discarded the *crustula* in the way of exciting pictures and trivial anecdotes which presumably attract and entertain the High School beginner. They have introduced accurate but simply stated observations bearing upon the theory of the language, observations which do, in truth, interest and stimulate any good student. Most of the material in the exercises is taken from original Latin sources. Although the sentences are often to some degree curtailed and simplified, the result is still far different from the synthetic ('made') Latin of so many extant text-books for beginners in Latin, and much more likely to prove efficient as an introduction to the competent reading of Latin. This selection of material also makes possible a vocabulary with a normal relation to the Latin studied, "compiled from the sentences, not vice versa" (Preface, vii). In the presentation of forms, too, the authors have shown their discernment. Instead of depending on the child's aptitude for sheer memorizing of forms as such, when not too many are given at a time, they have assumed on the part of the students they have in mind some ability

to group and systematize stems and endings, and so to economize time and effort. For instance, the entire indicative active of the first conjugation, with the principal parts, the present and perfect infinitives, and, of course, illustrative exercises, is presented in one lesson, the second; the rest of the conjugation, barring the subjunctive and the imperative, comes in the sixth lesson, after intervening lessons have kept up practice in the active verb forms while the first and the second declensions have been introduced. Lesson VII, in which the necessary command of endings and of stems taken from principal parts is assumed, presents the second conjugation in extent parallel to that in which the first conjugation has been presented. Lesson VIII takes up the imperative in both conjugations, with a complete scheme of the use of principal parts. Lesson IX presents the third conjugation entire except for the subjunctive, and Lesson X does the same for the fourth. The subjunctive mood of all conjugations is taken up in Lesson XXV. Its forms are given in full, and two of its uses are exhibited in independent sentences.

In presenting other paradigms the same principle is followed. As is stated in the Preface (vii),

...It has been the experience of the authors that students do not, as a matter of fact, turn to appendices to learn new forms, but prefer to have them available at the point where needed. Type-forms, however, have been recapitulated in the appendix, and, wherever practicable, the words used for this purpose are different from those which are inflected in the lessons.

It is frankly acknowledged (viii)

that many of the lessons cannot be covered in a single class recitation period. *It has been thought wiser to*

*adjust recitations to subject-matter, rather than subject-matter to recitations....*

The italics in the quotation just given are mine, in token of hearty agreement. So many factors combine to determine how much can be covered in a single day (the size of the class, the interval between recitations, the previous experience of the students, and other aspects of local conditions) that it is both futile and annoying to have a text-book attempt to make rigid assignments for every day. This book, indeed, in its entire plan and development leaves it possible for the teacher to vary speed and emphasis as circumstances or personal judgment may dictate, and he can do so without interfering with the scheme of the book.

There are thirty-seven lessons in all, covering 193 pages. The remaining 125 pages are occupied by brief biographical sketches of the Roman authors from whose work is taken most of the Latin in the book (197-213), the Appendix, which recapitulates the paradigms (217-255), the vocabularies, Latin-English (289-300) and English-Latin (301-310), and a competent Index (317-319). Even allotting more than one recitation for many of the lessons, I find the selection and the compression of material such as befits a College course which must include much reading of connected prose and verse in its first year, and provide a sound basis for further progress in later years. My own experience has proved the feasibility and value of such a course, and I have found Latin Fundamentals a distinct asset in still further developing its possibilities.

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